

Understanding Professional Expertise and Jurisdiction

Lieutenant Colonel Richard A. Lacquement Jr., U.S. Army

JUNIOR LEADERS of the Army profession must understand the nature of Army professional expertise and be able to relate this expertise to appropriate professional jurisdictions. This article attempts to do three things. First, it presents a way to think about the abstract professional knowledge that the Army requires as an institution. Second, it links this institutional imperative to suggestions for the contours of the expert knowledge required by individual professionals. Third, it describes a logical way to connect this expertise to the jurisdictions of professional practice. This approach seeks to move beyond broad concepts of full-spectrum dominance to a framework that permits clearer definitions, distinct priorities, and sharper boundaries to guide professional practice and professional development.

Many recent studies about the future of the Army profession claim that there is significant tension about the future of the Army profession within the officer corps.¹ The dramatic changes in the international environment and the changing aspects of warfare associated with new technology and new techniques related to force transformation drives this tension. One of the most critical tasks facing the Army's strategic leaders is to define and clarify the expert knowledge that constitutes the Army's professional jurisdictions. Although the final decisions belong to senior civilian and military leaders, integrating new concepts throughout the profession requires the informed engagement of all officers. Officers must understand this critical component of the Army profession and participate in shaping the profession's future.

Full-spectrum dominance is a useful shorthand aspiration that glosses over the complexity of the varied demands the operational environment imposes on the Army as a whole and on individuals expected to operate along the entire spectrum of conflict with uniformly high competence. The spectrum of conflict and range of military operations is vast. Society might well require the Army to participate in all

kinds of missions. The difficulty is that the Army, as well as its individual members, is not infinitely capable. There are limits on the capacity of the required choices. Limits include time, manpower, materiel, and a host of other factors. We must be careful not to become jacks-of-all-trades and masters of none. Everyone trying to do everything might lead to everyone doing nothing well. We already acknowledge that fighting and winning the Nation's wars is the highest priority. Taking the nonnegotiable contract from the U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 1.04 series as the start point, we can identify other priorities at the nexus of expert knowledge and jurisdictions of practice.² We should be forthright in debating and negotiating these priorities. We owe society and the members of the profession this improved clarity as a step toward greater effectiveness.

The Army's Expert Knowledge

One of the first and most far-reaching tasks we must undertake is to clarify the nature of the profession's expert knowledge. Professionals are experts in an abstract body of human knowledge.³ The quintessential characteristic of a profession is the exercise of judgment. A common description of military professional expertise is the management of violence.⁴ I submit that this is no longer a useful phrase with which to describe military expertise. The term suggests management as the critical central expertise and obscures the more important role of leadership and the centrality of the human dimension of the profession. Leadership, not management, is the true core of the Army profession. A better definition would be, "The core expertise of American military officers is the development, operation, and leadership of a human organization, a profession whose primary expertise is the organized application of coercive force on behalf of the American people." In abbreviated form, "Expertise is leadership of Army soldiers in the organized application of coercive force."

	Expertise, applicability and priority	Army unique	Military unique	Army specific application	General application (needed internally)	General application (needed externally)
	Character of expertise	Core	Core	Core support	Acquired	Borrowed
	How acquired	Army exclusive	Military exclusive	Army and society	Contract IN	Contract OUT
	Developmental responsibility	Army	Military	Society with Army component	Society with Army quality control	Society
	Certification	Army	Military	Army	Army and society	Society
Military Technical Expert Knowledge	Leadership of human organizations in application of coercive force	X (sustained land warfare)	X (general warfare)			
	Combat	X				
	Combat support	X				
	Joint operations		X			
	Combined operations		X			
	Admin/Logistics			X		
	Engineering/Science			X		
	Information technology			X		
Human Development Expert Knowledge	Leadership			X		
	Human behavior			X		
	Physical fitness			X		
	Education			X		
	Combat medicine			X		
	Family medicine				X	
	Social work				X	
Moral-Ethical Expert Knowledge	Ethical standards	X	X			
	Character development	X	X			
	Legal			X		
	Soldier spirituality				X	
Political Social Expert Knowledge	Advice on behalf of and representation of the profession	X	X			
	Political negotiation			X		
	Diplomacy (attaché)			X		
	Resource acquisition and management				X	X
Other	Basic research					X

Figure 1. The four broad categories of Army expertise and specific areas of expert knowledge relative to the core expertise of leadership of soldiers in the organized application of coercive force.

Institutional-Level Professional Expertise

There are four broad categories of Army expertise: military-technical, human development, political-social, and ethical-moral.⁵ These categories embody the expertise the Army profession requires to successfully fulfill its charter to American society. Figure 1 provides a draft map of the Army's expert knowledge and prioritizes specific areas of expert knowledge relative to the core expertise of leadership of Army soldiers in the organized application of coercive force.

The first priority is the Army's unique expertise in the employment of landpower. This is expertise

that is not available anywhere else in American society. The Army has statutory responsibility for developing this capability, which fits within a broader set of skills and knowledge for which the Nation's military services are exclusively responsible. Counterparts of this core professional expertise also reside within the armed services of other nations. Concepts of joint and combined operations express this professional relationship.

Of secondary priority are areas of expertise more broadly available within civil society for which there are Army-specific applications. In these areas, the Army is not the sole or even primary source of professional development. Because of the specific ap-

plication of such expertise on behalf of the Army, however, there are specialized adaptations and applications that the Army must control. An excellent example of this is professional medical expertise. The medical profession provides the primary education and certification of medical professionals. The Army conducts additional education and development to focus on the peculiar demands of combat medicine and the application of military professional ethics to the practice of medicine in war and other military circumstances.

Areas of societally available expertise for which there are minimal, if any, adaptations required for application within the Army are the third priority. The routine need for such expert capability makes it appropriate to have it readily available and resident within the Army as an institution. Whether among special branch officers or civilian employees, the Army needs such expertise to function successfully.

The fourth and lowest priority is expertise not commonly required by the Army that others in society could provide. Rather than maintaining these skills internally, the Army can contract out for such expertise. Basic research is a good example of this.

Figure 1 shows various fields of expert knowledge as they relate to the Army's institutional priorities. The Army must develop, control, and certify expertise within the first priority (figure 1, first two columns). These areas of expertise are the responsibility of commissioned officers. The second priority (figure 1, third column) represents areas of specialized expertise adapted from a broader societal base. The adapting and applying of such expertise is best accomplished through special branch and midcareer specialization of commissioned officers intimately familiar with the profession's core expertise and responsibilities. The last two priorities permit broader latitude in acquiring expertise from society that helps meet the Army's overall objectives. The application of expertise in these areas must fall under the leadership of Army professionals who have mastered the Army's core expertise and are sufficiently well-versed in this external expert knowledge to provide effective liaison in applying such expertise to the Army's precise demands.

A lieutenant briefs his men before they begin training with local hospital staff in Strpce, Kosovo, 11 June 2002.



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Defining Individual Expert Knowledge

The Army needs both generalists and specialists to meet its needs. Generalists become the strategic leaders of the Army and must be familiar with most the major aspects of expertise that support core Army competencies.⁶ In Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS) III, these are the officers in the operational career field. Specialists complement these generalists as experts in the various areas of abstract knowledge that support the Army's core skills. In OPMS III, some officers are career-long specialists who usually acquire their unique expertise before entering the Army. They include chaplains, lawyers, and doctors. Many officers will become midcareer specialists by joining the nonoperational career fields after extensive experience in the operational career field's basic branches.

Officers of the operational career field provide the core of the Army profession. These officers, from whom the institution draws future strategic leaders and midcareer specialists, need a broad education that supports all four categories of Army expertise.

The relative importance of expertise from the four categories changes in the course of a professional's career. There is greater emphasis on narrow tactical military-technical skills (tactics, techniques, and



principles [TTP]) early in an officer's career. As an officer's career progresses and the officer achieves positions of greater responsibility in tactical and operational units, emphasis shifts to broader principles of war and more complex judgments related to applying coercive force. Human-development expertise, such as leadership, aspects of psychology, and physical fitness, has greater relative importance in tactical assignments, particularly command. Emphasis on political-social expertise increases later in an officer's career, especially in midcareer and in senior assignments, including greater emphasis on coordination and interaction with units and individuals beyond an officer's immediate specialty. The importance of political-social expertise is even greater with respect to assignments at the nexus of civil-military interaction and liaison with armed forces of other nations. Similarly, requirements for ethical and moral expertise rise dramatically as rank and responsibility increase, particularly in command.

A key element of this broad treatment of Army expertise is the perishable nature of specific technical knowledge. Officers must understand the systems and weapons of the units they lead, but the most important professional knowledge they must master are the enduring, higher order demands for leadership and professional military judgment. This knowledge permits Army professionals to integrate specific skills and equipment, much of which is transitory, within solidly grounded frameworks of professional practice.

Principles of Army Education

Internally, the profession's educational priority is to inculcate virtues that support individual self-awareness and adaptation (metacompetencies noted by the Army Training and Leader Development Panel).⁷ The Army's institutional efforts must focus on developing the broad capacity for individual pro-

fessionals to learn how to learn. Core educational programs must develop analytical capacity and critical reasoning skills. Secondary to this are the efforts to train individuals on specific skills and to impart detailed knowledge to meet short-term requirements. The goal is to create experts in the leadership of Army soldiers in the organized application of coercive force. The primary means to accomplish this are the professional military education system and the assignment process used to generate practical professional experience.

Professional-development systems must produce individuals to meet current and short-run challenges and to adapt to uncertain future challenges. Such a system must place less emphasis on particular perishable technical skills and place greater emphasis on qualities of enduring value (physical, spiritual, and ethical) and the capacity to learn and grow professionally throughout a lifetime of service to the Nation. Traditions that produce leaders who have simply mastered to higher degrees their predecessors' technical skills are likely to serve the Nation poorly. In an era of rapidly changing technology, mastery of particular weapons and equipment might provide only fleeting benefit. More important is intellectual strength and agility, which allow leaders to understand the dynamics of change and readily adapt to new capabilities to enduring requirements and to adapt old capabilities to new requirements. Ultimately, the value of any skill must relate to the touchstone of effective leadership of Army soldiers in the application of coercive force.

Practical implications include a greater emphasis on the Army Officer Education System to develop officers' analytical skill and to focus less on training for routine tasks that well-developed standards govern. Similarly, assignment must focus on latitude for officers to exercise professional judgment instead of being measured by successful completion of checklists and standard operating procedures admitting of only the most minimal creative adaptation. The Army must resist the temptation to rely on easily measured but often superficial indicators as a substitute for complex qualitative assessments of less tangible but more significant traits, which are valuable in achieving effectiveness in the most demanding environments, particularly combat.

Understanding Professional Jurisdictions

Army expertise should be directly related to legitimate professional jurisdictions. Professional jurisdictions are prioritized with respect to relevant expertise and legitimized by the profession's client. For the Army, this client is American society, as represented by its civilian leaders.

Jurisdictions must be negotiated with civilian leaders. The Army competes with other military services and civilian professions for authority in particular jurisdictions, which can be divided into six broad jurisdictions, four external to the Army and two internal. The four external jurisdictions are conventional war; unconventional war; stability and support operations; and homeland security. Developing expert knowledge and developing future professionals with warfighting expertise are two internal jurisdictions. Figure 2 depicts the Army's main competitive jurisdictions.⁸

The Army must fight to control or at least share control of jurisdictions in which its core expertise applies. Jurisdictions within which the Army should seek to sustain full and complete control include those related to the organized use of landpower in the application of coercive force on behalf of the State. This includes all elements of warfare involving ground combat (conventional war, unconventional war, direct liaison, and training with allied or coalition ground forces). This also includes missions such as peace enforcement and peacekeeping where the Army's role is to exercise organized coercive force to deter violence by other groups or to ensure their defeat if deterrence fails. In situations where the use of coercive force is unnecessary, the Army is also unnecessary. The Army should work to minimize its responsibility in such jurisdictions, with one important caveat: there are times when the Army's utility is not based on professional expertise, but on its disciplined, trained, and ready manpower that can operate in austere environments.⁹ In such situations, expedience might demand the Army's short-term help. However, to provide such service does not require the Army to provide the related professional expert knowledge. For example, the Army might be an excellent source of manpower to provide emergency support to firefighters in surge operations. Firefight-

ing should not, however, become an area of professional expertise for the Army profession. Army leaders should be content with a subordinate role.

In the end, civilian leaders make decisions about the Army's jurisdictions. Army leaders participate in this process by articulating clearly how the Army's capabilities and expertise can effectively serve society's needs. Conversely, Army leaders must articulate limits and establish priorities to help civilian leaders avoid overextension and misapplication of Army capabilities.

Meeting Society's Needs

The Army must have clearly understood jurisdictions for action, and it must have well-understood expertise to accomplish society's requirements within those jurisdictions. To make this possible, strategic leaders must ensure that educational and professional development processes match society's needs. In an era of war threats and continued demands for Army participation in stability and support operations, there is need for greater fidelity to build on the warfighting priority to establish relative priority among other areas of expertise. Moreover, warfighting is a complex endeavor that requires the application of expertise, some of which is available from American society at large, to support the Army's effective use of coercive force.

Army leaders must negotiate with society's civilian leaders to prevent drift and confusion about the profession's jurisdictions and expertise. Junior Army leaders must understand the priorities and limits of the Army's professional expertise. The Army needs professionals with the intellectual agility to understand the dynamics of change and to be able to readily adapt new capabilities to enduring requirements and old capabilities to new requirements. The Army will develop future strategic leaders of the profession from the ranks of its junior professionals. **MR**

NOTES

1. The tensions surrounding the future of the profession is a prominent point in reports by the Army Training and Leader Development Panel (ATLDP) and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). See ATLDP, *Officer Study: Report to The Army*, on-line at <www.army.mil/features/ATLD/report.pdf>, May 2001, and CSIS, *American Military Culture in the 21st Century: A Report of the CSIS International Security Program* (Washington, DC: The CSIS Press, February 2000). See also Don. M. Snider and Gayle Watkins, eds., *The Future of the Army Profession* (New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2002).

2. The U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 1-04 series includes FM 1-04.0, *Legal Support to Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], 1 March 2000); FM 1-04-1, *Legal Guide for Commanders* (Washington, DC: GPO, 13 January 2002); FM 1-04.10, *The Law of Land Warfare* (Washington, DC: GPO,

15 July 1976); and FM 1-04.14, *Legal Guide for Soldiers* (Washington, DC: GPO, 16 April 1991).

3. Andrew Abbott, *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

4. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957).

5. See Snider and Watkins, chapter 1.

6. See FM 1.

7. ATLDP, *Officer Study Report*, OS-6.

8. Snider and Watkins, 8.

9. Leonard Wong and Douglas V. Johnson II, "Serving the American People: A Historical View of the Army Profession," in Snider and Watkins, 62.

Lieutenant Colonel Richard A. Lacquement, Jr., is Professor of Strategy and Policy at the U.S. Naval War College. He received a B.S. from the U.S. Military Academy, an M.A. from the Naval War College, and an M.P.A. and a Ph.D. from Princeton. He is a graduate of the College of Naval Command and Staff and the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He has served in various command and staff positions in the continental United States and Germany, including Division Artillery Executive Officer (XO), 101st Airborne Division Artillery (Air Assault), and Battalion (BN) XO, 3d BN, 320th Field Artillery, Fort Campbell.